

When 1,000 members are enrolled a national delegate convention will be called to formally organize and incorporate the church

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

After months of delay, months of failure in an effort to get caught up with the Blade, we are pleased to announce to our readers that we are now in a better position to get the Blade out on time and give it more improved appearance. We are making arrangements to inject into it a new life, furnish more editorial writing and a general all round improvement. While we have considered, and do now, that the Blade is the equal of any Free Thought paper published in America, not considering the price, and superior to some, we realize that there is much room for improvement and will now be able to make such improvements that may be necessary.

Our ambition is to make the Blade absolutely the best Free Thought paper in America. We also desire to get it more widely read. To do this we are preparing to send out sample copies, as many as we please in this effort. It is not to be expected that we know who to send them to. Our friends can aid us by sending us names of Free Thought friends who would be likely to become a subscriber and we can then send out a number of sample copies in the hope of securing them. Don't wait until tomorrow to send these names in but it now before you forget it.

GOD OR GOLD

In the old days men quarreled, took up the sword and fought for religious opinion's sake. The crusades were but the aggregate of individual fanaticism. Modern churchmen fight not for principle, but for gold.

The Blade recently gave an account of the disruption of an Episcopal church in New York City. It was taken from the public press and no suspicion of a distorting of facts can be laid at our doors. The account gave a vivid description of rival factions taking up different collections and a free fight following for the possession of both.

From the published facts in the case it is made evident that some secret understanding existed between the members of each faction for one side of the controversy refused to chip in the baskets of the other faction and vice-versa. It was when both sets had fully collected all there was coming that the fight occurred and the active belligerents have now proceeded to haul each other before the civil tribunals that a religious dispute may be adjusted, if ever it can be.

Where such disgraceful scenes but enacted at a Free Thought convention or gathering they would be made the happy theme for many a sermon and American pulpits would undertake to carry the news around the world. Comments would be made and the row pointed at as an evidence of the worldliness of Free-thinkers. As it happens they actually occurred in a church. In a church of high standing. The combatants and disputants had knelt before the same shrine, lifted up their voices in prayer together at the throne of grace. They had been baptized at the same font and had eaten of the body and drank of the blood of Christ together at the same communion table. They had fervently declared themselves to be free from evil thoughts, at peace and in charity with their neighbors. But what a lie! There was no peace or charity. Religious hate rankled within their breasts. Their prayers were but a mockery, a string of words without meaning. They were trying to deceive themselves and actually believed they were successfully deceiving the god they were worshipping. This is what Christianity had done for them. It is not possible that such cantankerous subjects of the King of Kings could dwell in peace and harmony even in their heavenly mansions. The fight started on earth would be continued there and the devil would get a big interest out of it.

What do these incidents suggest? What do they imply? There is no loving their neighbor as themselves. There is no doing unto others as they would be done by. There is no golden rule. They may pretend to love god but we now know that they positively love gold more. It is only a difference of one letter but with an aspirate attached it can cause lots of trouble. In the mouth of an Englishman it could be given a different meaning. Of course each faction will pray to the same god for help and ask him to confound and confuse their enemies, for so religion has made them. In fact each side will strive play their god an engine of the foe. As in battle, the Lord is on the side of the biggest, strongest, bravest and best equipped army, so the Lord will be on the side of the strongest and most powerful faction. The latter will be supplied with the religious, hair-triggered, hoodoo and they won't have to use the jawbone of a defunct jack to drive the other faction to the wall. Only show your greater strength and the Lord is with you.

But what a scene. Imagine devout deacons swatting each other in the eye with a chunk of religious love and a clenched fist until the purple flows in streams and dyes the floor a crimson stain. Imagine the sweet sisters making an assault on each other millinery, grabbing each other by the back-hair and rubbing their noses in the sawdust. These are the glorious gifts of religion and a camp-meeting certificate of conversion. For years these same people have been dispensing saving grace with galleons ropes and with clubs drove heaven inspired precepts into the heads of unbelievers. Now they turn upon each other and the change of method is a welcome innovation.

CRITICISM OF THE ROME BOOK.

Through Mr. James B. Elliott, of Philadelphia, Secretary of the United Paine Memorial societies, we are informed that a literary lady of that city, one who has been a resident of Rome, has consented to write a criticism of Dr. Wilson's book, a trip to Rome, and the Blade is assured of the manuscript for publication, provided, Dr. Wilson will reply to the criticism. Without having communicated with Dr. Wilson on the subject, we feel safe in stating that he will assuredly reply to any criticism that, by its nature would call for a reply, and we will be pleased to give publication to both the criticism and the reply. As the comments so far received concerning Dr. Wilson's effort have been of such a flattering nature, our readers will be curious to know just what criticism can be made and they will watch for its coming. Don't hesitate, friend Elliott, send on the manuscript.

SPOILED HIS OWN GAME

Avarice of a Moslem Priest Caused Him to Lose His Graft and Broke up The Biggest Monopoly The World Ever Knew

DEED TO HELL AND BUSINESS GAVE OUT

The oil trust or the steel trust, the sugar combine or a corner in wheat or beef may seem a huge affair to one outside of Wall Street, and even the Wall Street broker, holding a monopoly of the most powerful concerns in the world. As mighty as they are they are but slight things, of trifling importance, when compared with a monopoly which is controlled by a half civilized Arab.

The Arab is not a frequenter of Wall Street; it is doubtful if he has ever heard its name. Of stocks and bonds he knows nothing; the financial news of the daily papers he never reads; the rise and fall of market affects him in no way, and a stock exchange he has never seen.

Only once or twice in all his life he has left his little native village, and then he wandered as a humble pilgrim to the sacred city of Mecca. He lives in no sumptuous palace; to attend him are no clerks or servants other than a half naked cook, whose principal occupation is to bring him frequent sip of black coffee and fresh bread to light his long chamber.

His office is the obscure chamber where he sits by day and sleeps by night, yet he controls a monopoly of the greatest importance to millions of Moslem people, and in comparison with which the name of Standard Oil is insignificant.

Abdullah is the name of this marvelous financier, and his home is in the little town of Samarra, on the Tigris River, two days north of the famous city of Baghdad. Here squatting upon a straw mat, which is spread on the floor, with a red pen, a bottle of ink, a dish of sand to serve as a blotter and an impressive seal lying by his side, he transacts his own business. He is the president, the board of directors, the secretary, the treasurer, the clerk, the porter and office boy all in one.

A generation ago Abdullah was a struggling Moslem priest, and like many of his fellows, was a Moslem with a greater amount of cunning than piety. His religious duties brought him an exceedingly small income but an abundance of time, which he industriously employed in devising ways and means to increase his revenue. The fact that he became the world's greatest monopolist is evident by his ability.

Samarra, though far from Mecca and the other sacred cities, is on the route from all north-rising Mesopotamia and Persia. To the vast companies of passing pilgrims, as they pause on their long journey for a day's rest, Abdullah announced that he had received a special revelation.

According to the revelation, no one however pious, however many times he had made the pilgrimage to Mecca, not even though he had killed a Christian in battle, could be sure of entering Paradise unless he possessed a title to his sacred soil. The announcement was startling, but to the pious pilgrims it was true beyond a doubt a priest and said it.

The news of the revelation spread over the desert with a surprising rapidity and crowds flocked to Abdullah to learn how they might obtain some of the celestial real estate. To the inquiring hands he showed complicated maps and plans which none could understand, and then explained that if one would escape the flames of Hades it was well to pray, better to make the pilgrimage to Mecca, but the best and surest way of all was to purchase a title deed to a building lot in heaven. He alone had been commissioned by Allah to sell to all of the faithful who came.

The monopoly started, and Abdullah was busy from morning till night writing the deeds. For all who came a parcel of Paradise was selected and defined, and its deeds was quickly prepared, sealed with an impressive seal and delivered for the consideration of a substantial fee.

Some desired a corner lot; others less endowed with worldly goods, were contented with a less conspicuous location; while those who were too poor to purchase so large a tract of land might obtain standing room for a smaller sum. Even the beggar could be sure of entering Paradise if he possessed of the heavenly soil enough for the resting place of a foot.

Had the poorest of the pilgrims refused how they might be compelled to spend all eternity standing upon one leg, with no place to rest the other.

Abdullah's business could have increased, but the monopolist was safe; the Moslem pilgrims never thought of thinking.

The prices charged for a lot in Paradise varied exceedingly. No one could tell exactly how Abdullah regulated the charges; that was a part of the revelation, but to an observant observer it seemed that the appearance of the customer, the amount of the money he displayed, his eagerness to purchase and other considerations known only to Abdullah regulated the price.

For a corner lot, if the customer were wealthy, the price was never less than five Turkish liras (\$22), but it was the duty of a good Moslem never to bar any from the way to Paradise for the want of a single lira or a few piasters, so others received deeds exactly defining the location of the land, its dimensions and boundaries, in perfect accordance with the law. No one was too poor to purchase, no one, unless the price which he could pay was less than that of the paper of the deed, went away in disappointment.

Gives Deeds to Hades

Abdullah's business rapidly increased, for all the pilgrims far and wide saw the deeds of their friends; they hastened to purchase a lot of Heaven before it should be sold. One day when there seemed to be a lull in the trade and Abdullah sat long in the real estate office a stranger entered and asked if he could purchase a deed of Hades. The shrewd Abdullah, with an eye to business, immediately replied in the affirmative and though wondering why any one should desire to own a part of the place of eternal fire asked how large a tract was desired. The stranger said that real estate there should be cheap, yet if a deed for all Hades could be given him he would willingly pay five liras all the money he possessed for it.

Abdullah agreed to the proposition and hastened to arrange the transaction gave the stranger a paper duly signed and sealed and conveying to him the entire region known as Hades.

The stranger left the office of the heavenly real estate magnate, and with the paper in his hand walked upon the slope of the hill upon which he stands for a party of approaching pilgrims.

"Wither" he asked after the customary salutations had been exchanged. "To the house of the priest Abdullah" was the reply.

"Why" asked the possessor of Hades. "To purchase a place in Paradise" was the answer.

"Allah forbid" ejaculated the stranger. "It is no longer necessary."

The pilgrims passed to gaze with contempt upon one who should venture to dispute the authority of the pious Abdullah, and giving vent to their feelings in words started up the hill.

"It is no longer necessary" repeated the stranger, holding out the deed of Hades so that the impressive seal was visible.

The seal, for it was surely that of the priest, caught their attention, and again they started.

"What is that," they asked. The stranger briefly explained that but a moment before he had purchased all of Hades, and that he should reserve for it himself alone. From that time forth every Moslem whether faithful or unfaithful, must go to Paradise for Hades was his, and he would permit none to enter there.

(To be continued)

SACRED BOSH

(Continued From Page One.)

fectly satisfied merely to look at the painted canvases in front of the side show, churches with memorial windows, and to the bankers, the preachers, and about their three-headed goat feathered spirits and the wonderful dairy and beehives from which rivers of milk and honey shall flow forever, and ever and then some!

When you think that the Salvation show is free, the only condition that you clean up by taking a bath in the blood of the Lamb, it would seem that in the grand rush for reserved seats many Christians would be crowded in the second canopy; and they doubtless would be if Christians were not so considerate of each other. It would be so unchristian to crowd a neighbor out of the gateway of death and beat him to the choicest harp and coveys; or the warmest untaken spot in the capacious bosom of father Abraham; and of course people who love even their enemies and are constantly given all they have to the poor could not be selfish if they tried. And to the Christian hangs onto life, turns down the season ticket to the show, not because he does not want to go to heaven, but simply because he hates to leave his friends on earth.

The very thought of leaving them behind in this fleeting, sinful world of Easter bonnets and yellow-legged chicks gives the big hearted followers of the Meek and Lowly the blind staggers. Still he clings to life in spite of disease and all disasters until the good Lord breaks his back by piling on the years or lovingly calls him home by

burning him alive in a railroad wreck or blows him into Kingdom come with a Kansas cyclone!

In all the world there is no grander or nobler spectacle than that of the marvelous prescience with which the Christian refuses to let loose-to get off the earth and into heaven where he will have no more wars, and I hope the Blade will not accuse me of trying to organize a fun-syndicate because I express amazement at the men and women who had rather wait around knee-deep in the tearful slush and mud of earthly sorrow and wean than to parade the golden streets of the New Jerusalem with the eternal joy of shouting hosanna's and sox Michael's before the throne of Grace. What a glorious thing, it seems to me, to be able to look upon millions of the most beautiful angels wearing nothing but crowns. Where on earth is the beauty show that may be compared with the celestial chorus! And in addition to all this there is the ineffable joy of watching an innumerable multitude of healthful, fresh-looking and unspiced children wiggle and sizzle in hell.

Oh, what a thrice-blessed thing if the faith of the Christians in heaven were strong enough to make him get off the earth! How fortunate if the all-embracing sky could be turned in to one big porous plaster just long enough to draw Christianity out of civilization and its saintly devotees into the Kingdom of Grace!

PEACE CONFERENCE

(Continued From Page One)

So do we. You remember that we have been hearing of universal peace since 1887, 12 years ago. There have been conferences in Washington, Paris, Brussels.

The Hague, St. Louis, London, New York. World rulers have sent messages of co-operation. Carnegie has erected a gorgeous temple at The Hague.

There has been a great deal of talk. In the meantime Every Nation Has Continued To Strengthen Its Army, Its Navy, Its Defenses.

Look at the figures and the facts. The war footing of the world nations is 25,000,000 men.

The yearly expenses for maintenance and improvements is nearly \$600,000,000.

Every nation is building great war vessels. We have seen the Russo-Japanese war, which cost \$1,800,000,000 in money and nearly a half million lives.

At this moment England and Germany anticipate war. Our statesmen insist that we may as well prepare to grapple with Japan sooner or later. The Peace of Europe hangs on a thread.

The world is making gestures of peace with its left hand, and building ships and armies as fast as it can with its right.

The peace promoters talk of arbitration and the rules of war. They say little of disarmament, yet Disarmament Is The One Test Of Good Faith. War means maiming, killing, maiming suffering and death. It means orphan children and childless parents. It means forsaken friends and weeping mothers. It means nations bereft of glory of their young manhood, a cruel and unnecessary sacrifice in the name of patriotism.

That is the consideration for The Hague conference. That is the point of view which will bring disaster. That is the realization which will force arbitration and afford a basis for a reconsideration of national debts, of business interest or money, but the thought of The Sacrifice of Blood.

Paine's Idea Of A God.

The only idea that can afford to the name of God is that of a first cause, the cause of all things. An incomprehensible and difficult as it is for man to conceive what a first cause is, he arrives at the belief of it, from the ten-fold greater difficulty of believing it. It is difficult beyond description to conceive an end. It is difficult beyond the power of man to conceive an eternal duration of what we call time. In like manner of reasoning everything we behold carries in itself the internal evidence that it did not make itself. Every man is an evidence to himself that he did not make himself, neither could a tree, plant or animal make itself; and it is the conviction arising from this evidence, that carries us on as it were, by necessity, to the belief of the First Cause, externally existing, of a nature totally different to any material existence we know of, and by the power of which, all things exist, and this First Cause, man calls God.

It Is Given A Place.

Newton, Iowa
James E. Hughes,
Mr. J. C. Brown of Shenandoah, Iowa, is visiting relatives in Newton, and making his headquarters with his Athletic friend Dr. Hammer while in the latter office one day recited the following original poem to a small but appreciative audience, which I thought to be too good to be lost, so I had him re-

peat it and herewith send it to you that you will give it a place in the Blue Grass Blade.

M. Emma Hammer.

POTERY COLUMN

LEARN TO LAUGH

But suit your copy to the meat BALAAM'S ASS.

(By J. C. Brown)
And it came to pass, there was an ass, "Nathaniel" Balaam rode her. And as she was slow and would not go, Nathaniel had to goad her.

With a big bamboo, he cried out "skid-doo!"

Or was it a black malleack? In regard to this, it matters not. As he continued to "whack" her.

Now go long, says Nathaniel B. And be a good Ass, I pray you. If you don't I'll take this club. And the chances are I slay you.

But the ass stood still and ground her teeth.

As she answered in Ass vernacular. There's an Angel in the path with a flaming sword.

It's impossible for me to pass her. This strange, Tis strange; as I've oft remarked.

In this world of flowers, trees and grasses. That Angels never appear to you or me. But are only seen by ASSES.

The Man Who Wins.

The man who wins is the man who works— The man who toils while the next man shirks;

The man who stands in his deep distress— With his head held high in the deadly press—

Yes, he is the man who wins. The man who wins is the man who knows—

The value of pain and the worth of woes— Who a lesson learns from the man who falls—

And a moral finds in his mournful wails— Yes, he is the man who wins.

The man who wins is the man who stays— In the unsought paths and the rocky ways,

And, perhaps, who lingers, now and then, To help some failure to rise again,

Ah, he is the man who wins. And the man who wins is the man who bears—

The curse of the envies in his share— But goes his way with his head high—

And passes the wrecks of the failures— By— For he is the man who wins.

From The Chaplain

San Francisco, Dear Jim— I send with this a year's subscription

To the Blue Grass Blade, a paper fine. For dealing truth for a prescription.

For subscriptions things divine. That's all for the present. I'm getting into a holy state for Easter.

The Chaplain.

READ THE AUTONOMIST.

Armstrong's Autonomist is just one of the thousands of periodicals that are printed just as its editor is one of the millions of men that live. Why do I publish? Why do I live? You answer the second and I'll answer the first question.

The price of the Autonomist is 40 cents a copy, \$1.00 a year, but as it is devoted to the distribution of ideas rather than the collection of them, send me your name, with or without, and I'll do the rest. Address James Armstrong, 3509 N. Clark St. Chicago.

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